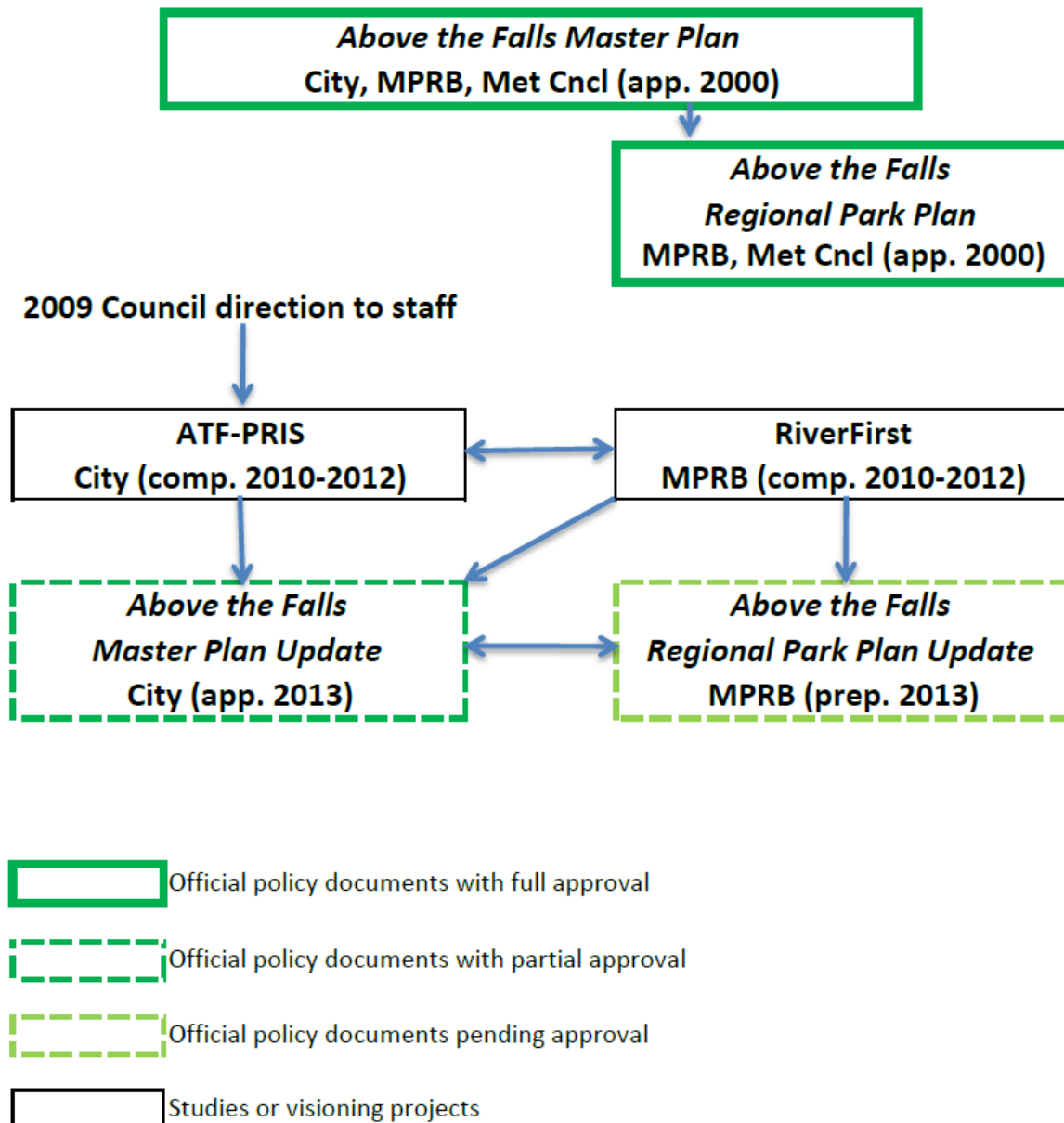


Background on Above the Falls Plans and Planning Processes

4/9/2015



See below for additional information.

Original Above the Falls Master Plan (approved by City and Park Board in 2000 and then by Met Council)

The original small area plan for the North and NE sections of the riverfront was approved by the City Council in 2000 after a multi-year process. It may be found here:

http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/planning/master-plans_above-falls_index.

This plan guided the UHT site to become a combination of residential and mixed-use development, with a strip of park land along the riverfront and a somewhat larger park area north of Dowling. Portions of this plan served as the plan for the Above the Falls Regional Park, which was submitted to the Met Council and approved.

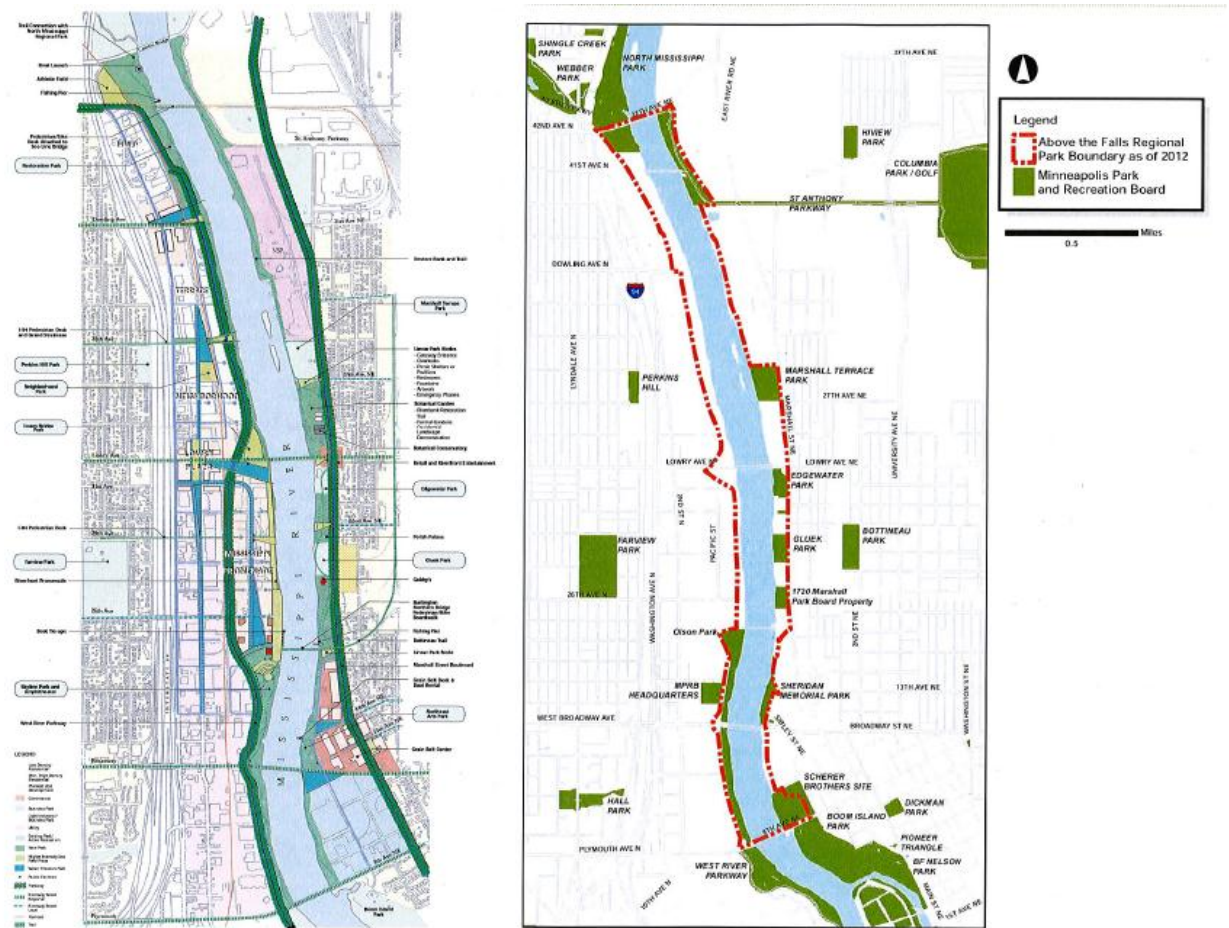


Figure 1.1 Existing Above the Falls Regional Park

2000 Above the Falls land use plan and corresponding 2000 regional park boundary

Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth (Comprehensive Plan) (approved by City in 2009)

The updated comprehensive plan was approved by the City Council with a specific condition related to the Above the Falls area that staff: “(1) explore policy and regulatory strategies for providing existing property owners clearer expectations about the phasing of long-range land use transitions; and (2) analyze and report back to the Council on the potential impacts of the land use guidance in the Above The Falls study area related to the extent and phasing of the proposed long-range transition from industrial to nonindustrial development.”

Above the Falls Policy Review and Implementation Study

As directed, this work started in late 2009 with an Above the Falls Policy Review and Implementation Study (ATF-PRIS), a summary of which may be found here:

http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/conver t_259187.pdf. This work focused on the feasibility of the land use changes proposed in the 2000 *Above the Falls Master Plan* and concluded that the analysis in the original 2000 plan wasn't robust enough to justify and support the plan's recommendations. In other words, it found the implementation path infeasible and recommended adopting an updated one.

RiverFirst (general vision approved by Park Board in 2012)

RiverFirst started out as a design competition for a park vision for the area from downtown to the north that was undertaken by the Minneapolis Parks Foundation and Park Board and completed over the winter of 2010-2011. Once the winning firm was selected, in spring of 2011 the work transitioned over to the RiverFirst Design Initiative to convert that winning general vision into more specific plans. Here's a link to that web site: <http://riverfirst.com/>. Here's how the Park Board summarizes RiverFirst and the process that lead up to its completion: https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park_care_improvements/park_projects/current_projects/riverfirst/#group_4_220406. This work was a visioning exercise and, while it informed both the City's *Above the Falls Master Plan Update* and the Park Board's *Above the Falls Regional Park Plan Update*, it was modified in both official documents and **does not have any official standing as an approved policy plan**.

The RiverFirst vision shows a large portion of the UHT site as a "Northside Wetland Park," along with a linear parkway/trail system through the site.

RiverFirst Vision

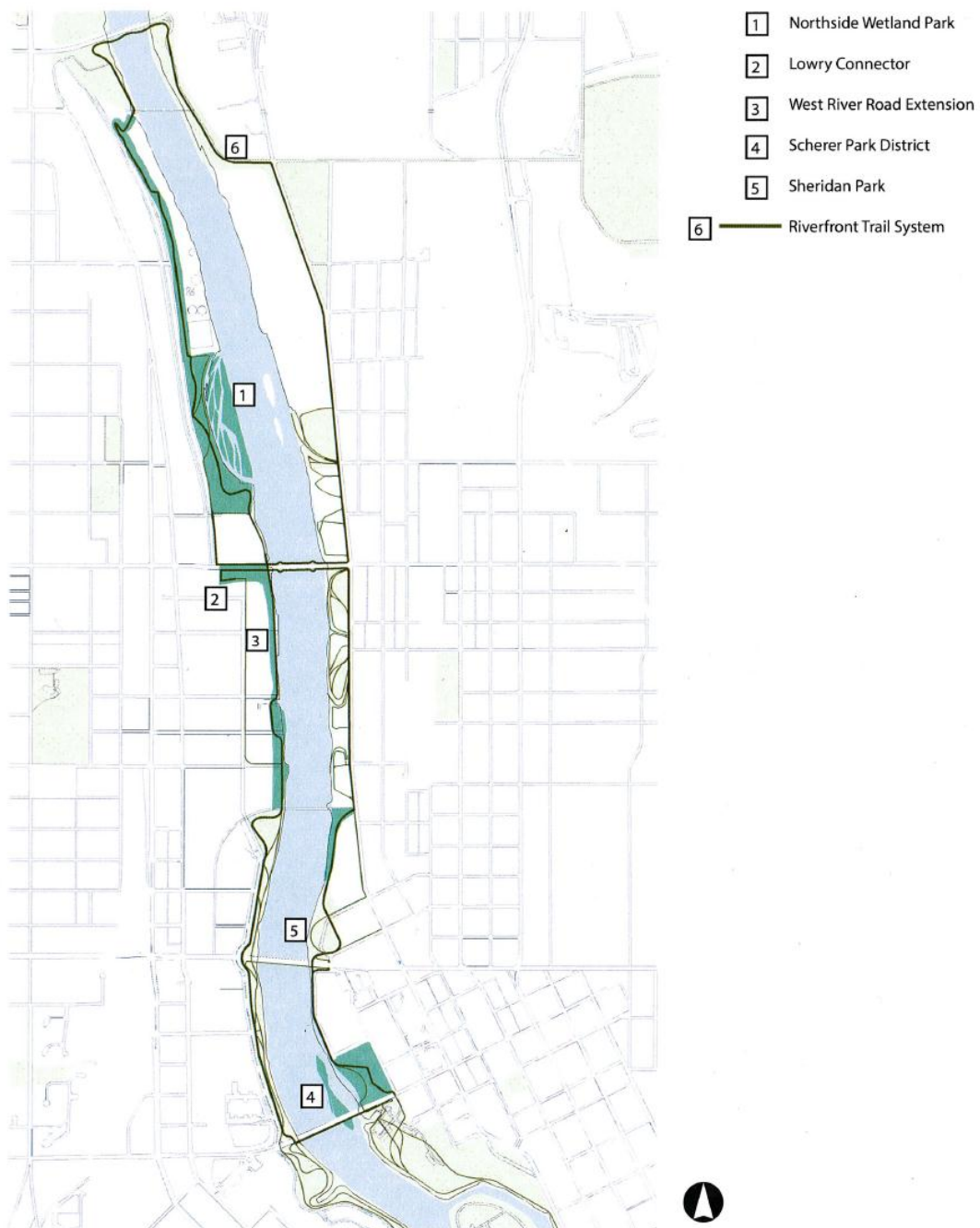


Figure 1.6 RiverFirst 5-year vision for parks development

Components of this near-term parks vision have been integrated with this 2013 ATF Park Plan.

Above the Falls Master Plan Update (approved by City in 2013, but not yet by Met Council)

Based on the ATF-PRIS and input from City Council, staff began work on an update of the 2000 *Above the Falls* plan. After extensive public engagement and research, the resulting updated small area plan was approved by the City Council in June 2013 and may be found here:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-110826.pdf>.

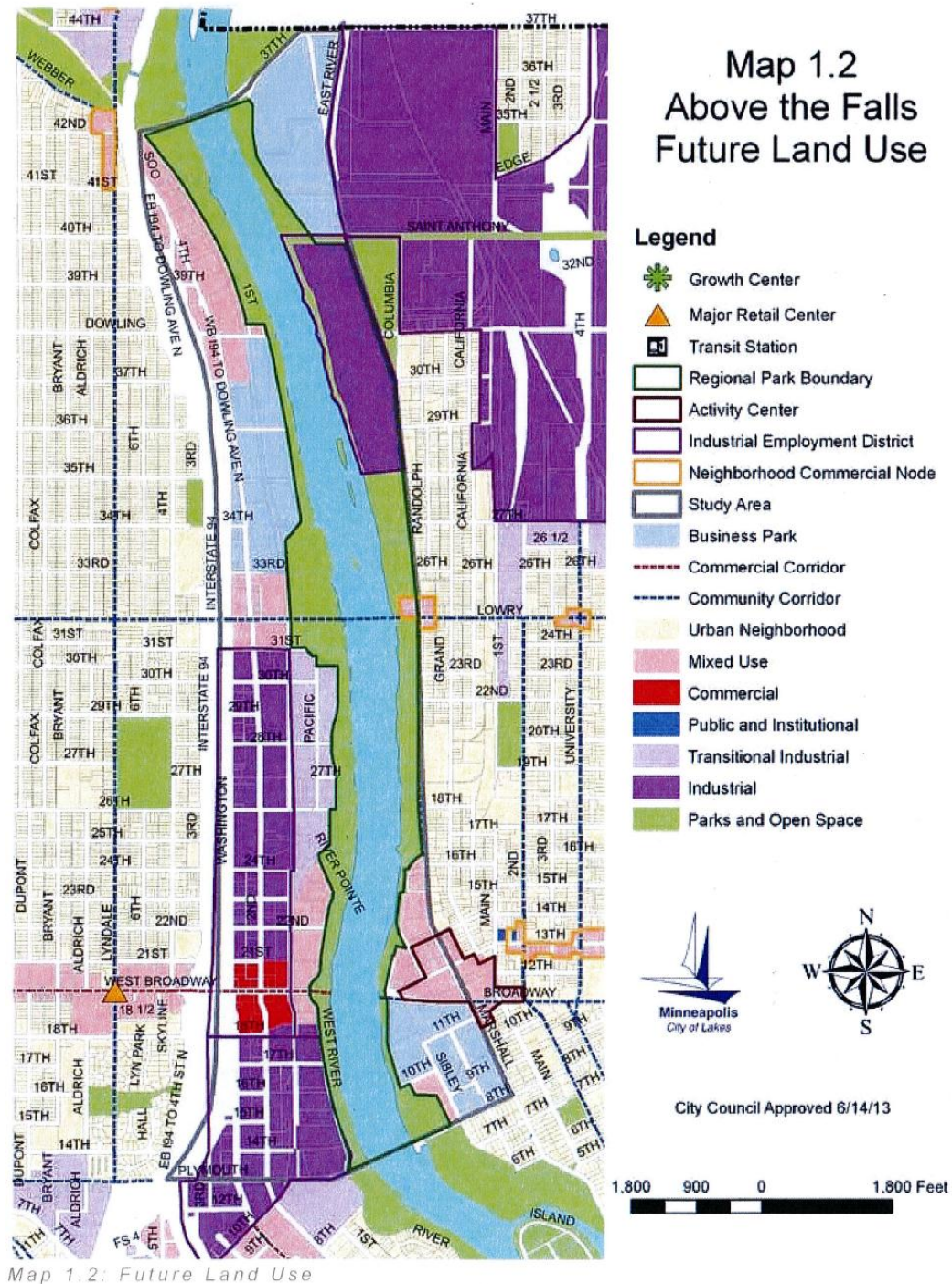
The UHT site is guided in the *Update* for a strip of park along the riverfront, with larger park areas to the north of Dowling and between 34th and 33rd avenues. Most of the UHT site not guided for park is shown as “business park” use, plus some areas identified as “mixed use.”

Business park is defined as focusing on “high value office and industrial development, while minimizing lower value uses. Industrial uses should focus on light industrial, including green industry, rather than heavy industrial. District should also include hospitality, retail, and other uses that complement riverfront parks and trails. While the zoning district would be primarily employment focused, it would be designed to be compatible with live-work uses and similar concepts for residential within an industrial setting, perhaps through the application of the Industrial Living Overlay District (ILOD).” Mixed use is defined as including “retail, office, residential, or other compatible uses either within a building or district. Depending on context, light industrial may also be appropriate, if the type and design are compatible with other uses in the area.”

Reflecting the vision in the original plan and input from the community, the update did note that land uses could transition further in the future. However, the plan noted that the timeline for that transition was still probably decades in the future, and recommended that the plan be reevaluated periodically as the area continued to transition.

(See map on next page)

Above the Falls Master Plan Update Land Use Plan, 2013



Above the Falls Regional Park Plan Update (prepared by Park Board, but not yet approved by Park Board or Met Council)

The *Above the Falls Regional Park Plan Update* can be found here:

https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/asset/pxm4rh/atf_masterplan_draft.pdf. As with the *ATF Master Plan Update*, this also is an update of the earlier regional park vision that was included in the 2000 *Above the Falls Master Plan*. The regional park and master plan update planning processes were completed concurrently in a carefully coordinated process. (Both the *ATF Master Plan Update* and the *ATF Regional Park Plan* await Met Council approval because they show different boundaries for the regional park.) This plan shows a smaller area devoted to the wetland park (or another meaningful park area) than is shown in the RiverFirst vision. As illustrated on p. 9, the park area shown in the updated regional park plan on the UHT site is similar to, but somewhat larger than, the park area outlined in the City's *Above the Falls Master Plan Update*.

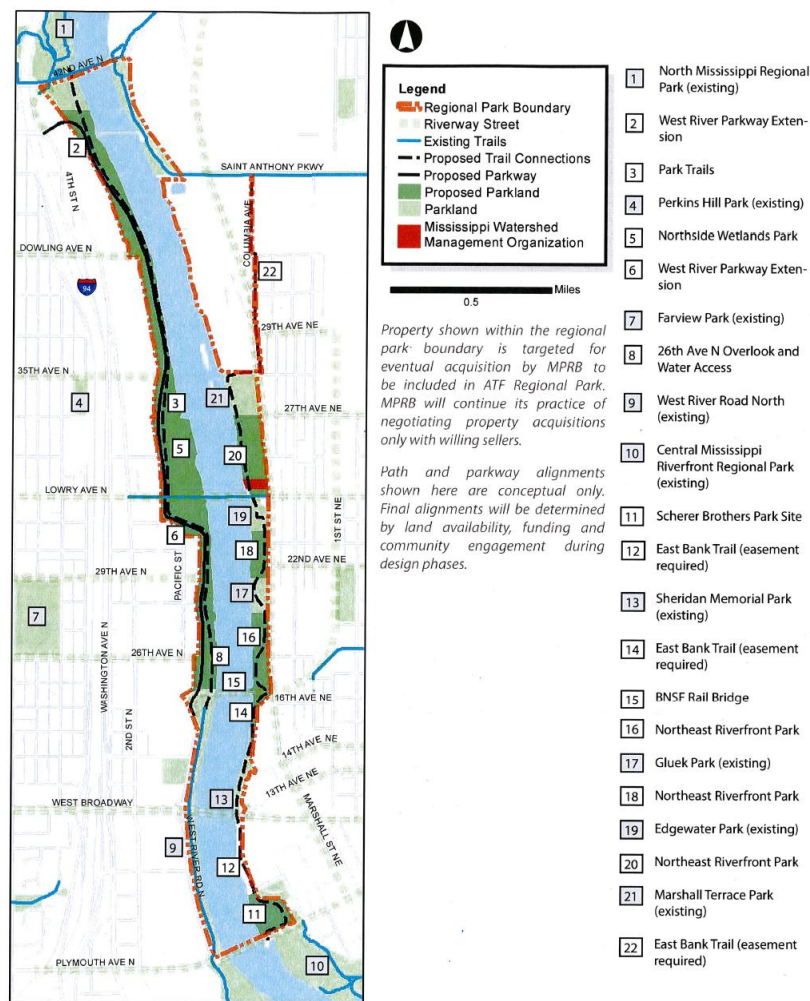
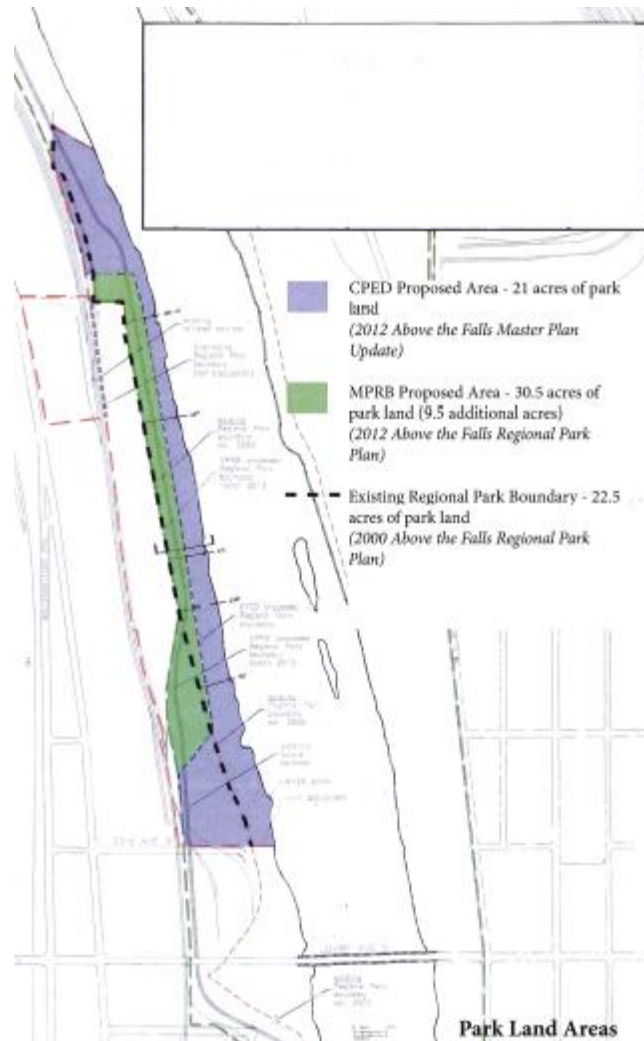


Figure E.1 Above the Falls Regional Park development plan

Comparison of Potential Park Boundaries

The City's *Above the Falls Master Plan Update* and the Park Board's draft *Above the Falls Regional Park Plan* both illustrate regional park boundaries, which are different, but not miles apart. Below is a graphic that illustrates the existing approved regional park boundary based upon the original *Above the Falls* plan (black dashed line), the regional park boundary as shown in the City's *Above the Falls Master Plan Update* (lilac area) and the regional park boundary as shown in the Park Board's draft *Above the Falls Regional Park Plan* (lilac area plus green area).



Approximate size comparison:

2000 <i>Above the Falls</i> plans boundary	22.5 acres
2013 ATF Master Plan Update boundary	21 acres
2013 MPRB-proposed boundary	30.5 acres
HKGI Concept 1	13.4 acres
HKGI Concept 2	18.0 acres (or more)
HKGI Concept 3	22.6 acres